PROCESSING OF CUSTOMER ORDERS

HARTING

Challenge:

» High processing effort of customer orders arriving by fax, e-mail and on paper
» Global orientation: rollout in 32 countries
» Best possible automation of data processing

Solution:

» Support of OCR capture
» Centralization of entry channels
» Central SAP book of arrivals
» Jump to VA01
» Integration of previous in-house developments
» International rollout

Benefits:

» Processing of around 170,000 yearly customer orders with several pages
» Central view and direct access to customer orders
» Reduction of paper consumption
» More transparency
» Early storing
» Accelerated processing

AFI
SOLUTIONS

HARTING digitizes the processing of customer orders

To be digital or not to be? At HARTING Technology Group, this has long since ceased to be a question but has become practice. How this works is illustrated very clearly by Harting's own claim »Pushing Performance«. For more than 70 years, companies have been implementing technological progress with innovative products across the globe. The global leader for industrial connection technology not only takes the motto »Pushing Performance« very seriously for its customers but also sets an innovative example with a high degree of automation.

In the area of customer orders, the company is expanding its digital strategy by AFI Order of AFI Solutions GmbH and ensures the best possible degree of automation within the sales processes of the SAP system. The internal sales team optimally supports the field sales force in customer

care: the employees take care of the creation of orders and answer queries. Therefore, it should not be part of the main workload of the working day to key data into the system. An informative customer service also requires a high level of transparency across all orders. Since paper does not blush, HARTING needed a speedier process.

The company already receives many customer orders digitally as EDI files and directly via its own web shop. However, a large number of documents remained which came in by e-mail, fax or even postally, according to Udo Altvater, IT Team Leader Sales at HARTING:

"In Germany, we receive about 170,000 yearly customer orders with several pages which do not arrive via EDI or our web shop and require a high processing effort. We were looking for an automation solution for these do-

cuments. Among the four suppliers we looked at, AFI Solutions GmbH stood out as an overall package."

Rapid information search through digitized documents and processes

In August 2016 the starting gun was fired for the project in the largest national subsidiary in Germany as by far the highest number of HARTING's documents accumulates here. Orders received by fax, e-mail or on paper are now scanned and read by OCR. In the central SAP book of arrivals, the AFI Order Monitor, employees immediately see each new order and its processing progress.

Susanne Nerge, Team Leader Customer Service at HARTING, sees a major advantage for customer service: *"In the past, order folders filled with paper were still in circulation so the*

search for information was rather elaborate when customers had queries. Now we see every order immediately in the AFI Order Monitor after it has been entered and can provide information quickly. The original document is automatically attached to the VA01 in SAP and available at a click. This also saves a lot of time."

Achieving the highest possible degree of automation

The specialist for connection technology has a lot of internal checks, special conditions and references that affect the orders. These checks must also be selected during document entry. For this purpose, employees confirm predefined queries with the enter key and ensure that special conditions are entered in the order.

Udo Altvater is satisfied with the solution and sees it as a further important step towards sustainable digitization: *"With the AFI tool, we have achieved the highest possible degree of automation in customer orders. This takes the pressure off our employees*

Udo Altvater, IT Team Leader Sales HARTING

and provides them with transparency and time for their core tasks. The reduction of paper consumption is a logical and positive side effect."

Employee acceptance and train-the-trainer concept

AFI Solutions trained the users after project launch but in the meantime HARTING's employees train their colleagues themselves. Udo Altvater clarifies the user acceptance as follows: *"Against all initial skepticism, employees find AFI Order to be a very hel-*

pful tool that saves work and shortens reaction times to the customer. This is due to the mere fact that the specialists use the tool. In the last two and a half years, we have already successfully processed document quantities in the six-figure range with the AFI solution."
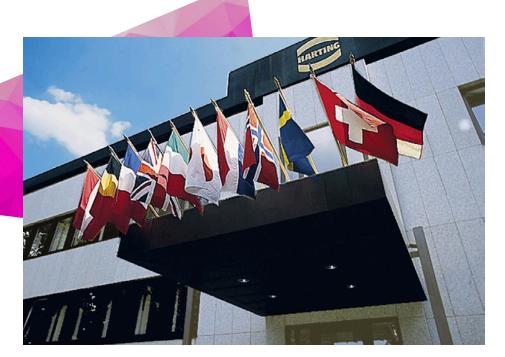
Company-wide rollout as well as personal support

Meanwhile, the solution is already productive in twelve countries and is gradually being rolled out throughout the entire technology group. According to the number of different form creations, document training was somewhat more complex in some countries than in others. From the German-speaking countries through to France, Italy, the Czech Republic, Canada, USA or the Netherlands, »Project Asia« is currently starting as Udo Altvater reports:
"We will start with the English-speaking countries in Asia and then rollout the solution in Traditional Chinese and Simplified Chinese. This will be really exciting for us."

Susanne Nerge,
Team Leader Customer Service HARTING

During the rollout, HARTING is supported by an AFI specialist who is in constant dialogue with the company which is a great advantage as the IT team leader puts it:

"We have a personal contact person at AFI with whom I am in contact on a weekly basis. This is when we discuss arising hurdles and how to proceed – for example in the Asia rollout. This type of support is very useful in my opinion. Both sides know about each other's idiosyncrasies and do not have to explain themselves each time. Our contact person already takes care of many support requests or forwards them to the right AFI channels if required which is perfect for us."

More automation in purchasing in the pipeline

HARTING has the strategic goal to increase the level of automation in the entire technology group to the extent possible. For this reason, the company has also purchased DirectConfirmationControl from AFI Solutions. The solution processes incoming order confirmations automatically.

"We have had a good experience with the AFI tool in sales so it stood to reason to test the solution in purchasing as well. Nevertheless, we also had a look at presentations from other manufacturers but in the end the AFI solution also prevailed among our colleagues in purchasing", concludes Udo Altvater.

HARTING Technology Group is one of the world's leading suppliers of industrial connection technology for the three lifelines data, signal and power with 13 production sites and subsidiaries in 44 countries.

Furthermore, the company also manufactures POS zones for retail, electromagnetic actuators for automotive and industrial series use, charging technology and cables for electric vehicles as well as hard and software for customers and applications, e.g. in automation technology, robotics and in the field of transportation.

About 4,600 employees generated sales of 672 million euros in 2016/17.

AFI Solutions GmbH is a leading solution provider for the digitization and optimization of document processes around SAP. The solutions cover the entire purchase-to-pay and order-to-cash process.

AFI is the only software manufacturer on the market that offers everything from a single source: With the RedPaperCenter as a managed service, companies can easily outsource the digitization of a wide variety of paper documents. In process optimization, AFI scores with SAP-integrated software solutions. The cloud-based DocumentHub as software as a service (= SaaS) completes the unique product portfolio.

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